

EXCART Briefing for Vinson Committee

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16 Jan '63

1. Four A-12 aircraft are now in flight test status. A fifth airframe has been delivered to the test area and is in process of assembly. All aircraft have carried out a total of 91 flights for approximately 110 hours flight time.

2. Earliest flights, which began in April 1962, used J-75 engines. However, Aircraft #1 carried out 18 flights, for about 15 hours, with one J-75 and one J-58 engine. Aircraft #2 flew for the first time with two J-58's on 15 January 1963.

3. The intended speed, with two J-58 engines, is Mach 3.2 at altitudes of 35,000 - 40,000 feet. Greatest speed to date, with one J-75 and one J-58, is Mach 2.15 at about 30,000 feet. Aircraft have demonstrated good flight characteristics and no major design problems have developed although until aircraft is operated at designed speeds final evaluation cannot be made.

4. Several different camera systems have been developed which should achieve resolution of approximately one foot. These have been tested at presently achieved speeds and altitudes but final evaluation awaits tests under designed operational conditions.

5. The most serious problem in recent months has been the procurement of reliable J-58 engines for this aircraft. Recent deliveries have improved but with some reduction in performance in order to achieve desired reliability. Fixes, in order to regain originally desired performance, are now being incorporated.

6. We still believe that the goal which was stated last year to this Committee of achieving an operational capacity in the summer of 1963 can probably be reached.